

17 July 1968

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director of Personnel for Special Programs
THRU : Chief, Benefits and Services Division/OP
SUBJECT : Social Worker

I finally managed to get with [] (OMS) re: the Social Worker memo from Mr. Coffey to D/OMS. STATINTL

Bill told me that OMS for several years had requested a Social Worker position at the GS-10 level for their T/O and it had been turned down.

I am attaching a copy of Dr. Tietjen's reply to the DDS that Bill bootlegged to me.

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C/PAB

STATINTL

14 May 1968

MEMORANDUM FOR: Assistant Deputy Director for Support
SUBJECT: Comments on Questions Posed by D/OPFB
REFERENCE: Your Memorandum, dated 8 April 1968

I. Deferral of Physical Examination of Clerical Personnel

1. In response to the proposal by Mr. John Clarke, D/OPFB, that pre-employment and EOD physical examinations on clerical personnel be deferred, the following observations are made.

2. It has always been the policy of the Agency to hire the best personnel possible for reasons of efficiency and security. This policy has recently been reaffirmed by the DCI in requesting OMS views as to whether medical standards for employment and subsequent assignment are sufficiently stringent, and whether medical advice on these matters is heeded by Agency components generally.

3. Evaluation and examination by OMS, pre-employment or upon EOD, include not only physical examination but scrutiny by the Psychiatric Staff for manifestations of psychiatric disorder, temperamental suitability for Agency employment generally and for the proposed assignment specifically.

This overall medical process identifies a very significant number of persons including clerical, whom we know by long experience to constitute a prohibitively high risk of developing disruptive physical or psychiatric illness, or engaging in untoward behavior short of frank illness. The threats to security and of Agency notoriety, as gauged by the intensity of the attendant flaps, are as great for clerical personnel as for others.

4. A significant number of pre-employment clerical personnel are found on physical examination to suffer from major medical conditions seriously limiting length of Agency employment and future assignability. Untoward consequences of an illness undetected at the time of employment invites claims and actions against the Agency and the Government.

5. Physical and psychiatric disorders are expensive and disruptive to the Agency and to the individual when they erupt in the course of Agency employment. It is more efficient to cancel processing at the outset since such conditions are detectable by comprehensive pre-employment medical examinations. Well over a hundred such cases are medically disqualified every year, who would otherwise be employed. Those disqualified, of course, are only those in which the nature and degree of the medical problems are

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much as to leave no reasonable doubt that the calculated risk of employment is prohibitive. Where, despite the problems, there is a reasonable chance of tolerable adjustment to Agency employment, the Office of Personnel is notified that there is or may be in the future some limitation of assignment, so that timely medical re-evaluation can be made for optimum planning purposes and before elaborate and expensive commitments are made.

6. The essential mission of the Office of Medical Services is to provide this very kind of support toward the greatest possible productivity of the Agency's human resources. This mission is accomplished largely through the Office of Medical Services' selection process. In view of the medical experience detailed above, it is difficult to imagine even a short term dollar saving to be realized by the medically indiscriminate hiring of clerical personnel.

7. Since the question raised by D/OPFB cuts to the heart of such basic issues, it should not be amiss to make the basic observation that, because of the nature of the Agency, it is a matter of everyday practical experience that there is no such thing as a CIA employee whose welfare and behavior are not of very serious concern.

II. Employment of Social Worker

1. The OMS is very much involved in the business of handling problem cases. So are other offices, notably the Offices of Personnel and Security. These problem cases are of all shapes and varieties and involve employees, ex-employees, dependents, associates, and even those unassociated. The problems involved are at times impressive with considerable at stake. They require the time and attention of a significant number of people during any particular period.

2. Problem cases represent complex social phenomena. Alcoholism is more than excessive drinking, anti-social behavior is not simply misconduct, psychiatric disorder is not just disease, defections are not only ideological shifts, dependent difficulties imply more than adolescent rebellion or marital strife. Each problem case represents a host of details and considerations representing the interaction between the individual and other individuals in his social awareness.

3. Over the years, the Agency has gained considerable experience in the handling of problem cases. Systems of coordination and cooperation have developed among Agency components and facility in handling has increased. It remains a fact that much of the handling and management detail must be done by individuals whose primary mission better equips them to do other things. In the OMS, psychiatrists may be facile in diagnosis and treatment

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but other capabilities do not exist for the detailed background investigation and interviewing, or the coordinating and follow-up associated with the professional service. The OMS would profit by having a capability trained for such purpose. We believe other Agency components could call upon such a capability and would also profit. In any specific case, this service could be used by the Office of Personnel or the Office of Security or a supervisor seeking technical help and guidance.

4. Society in general has its problem cases. To deal with such cases, a system has developed that utilizes psychiatrists, psychologists, and social workers. It is this latter category that is missing in our own handling mechanism. The term, "Social Worker", may be misleading and may imply charitable purpose. While it is hoped that good may be accomplished, a "Social Worker" is a person who has been trained and graduated from a specific course in social work. Customarily, the qualified social worker holds a Master's Degree in Social Work from an acceptable university. This background and experience is designed to equip the worker in dealing with the problem cases of society and to perform those services short of the professions of medicine and psychology.

5. The thinking of our office is that we would do well to adopt the system that is used effectively and extensively by professional services dealing with the problem cases of a society.

JOHN R. TIERNEY, M. D.
Director of Medical Services

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22 May 1968

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director of Personnel for
Special Programs

SUBJECT : Need for a Social Worker in the Agency

REFERENCE : Your Note of 17 April 1968

1. I asked Fran and Betty for comments on your request for views on whether we can use a social worker in the Agency.

2. Based on our experience in this field, I don't believe the services of a social worker could be fully utilized nor do I think they would have the freedom to operate in the manner in which they would have been trained. I do think that a trained social worker might have been more effective in dealing with [] than I have been, but as mentioned above, there are very few of our cases that require a social worker.

3. This does not mean, however, that the services of more good personnel counselors could not be used, and if we had a trained counselor who was also a qualified social worker assigned in BSD, I think the program could be improved.

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Chief, Personal Affairs Branch

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